

FWP COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: May 10, 2012

Agenda Item: Classification of Exotic Wildlife - Tilapia

Division: Fish and Wildlife

Action Needed: Approval of Proposed (tentative) Rule

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 minutes

Background:

The Classification Review Committee is recommending that the FWP Commission adopt a rule classifying Tilapia (*Oreochromis* spp.) as a Controlled Species (see Committee's Narrative for explanation on this recommendation).

To be legally imported or possessed in Montana, exotic wildlife must be classified by the FWP Commission through an administrative rule. Classification categories for exotic wildlife are noncontrolled, controlled, or prohibited. Noncontrolled species may be possessed, sold, purchased or exchanged in the state without a permit. Controlled species can only be possessed with a Controlled Species Permit and must meet the requirements on the permit. Prohibited species are not permitted for possession or transportation within the State.

A Classification Review Committee evaluates petitions for such classifications and makes a recommendation to the FWP Commission. The Committee's recommendations are based on:

- a) The environmental impacts caused by the animal if it is released or escapes from captivity, including ecological and economic impacts;
- b) The risk the animal would pose to health or safety of the public, wildlife or agriculture; and
- c) The ability to readily control and contain the animal in captivity.

The Committee includes representatives from: FWP; Montana Departments of Livestock, Agriculture, and Public Health and Human Services; the exotic pet trade; and a citizen with an interest in fish and wildlife.

Public Involvement Process & Results:

Administrative Rule procedures and public involvement requirements will be followed.

Alternatives and Analysis:

The commission could decide to adopt a different classification category for Tilapia.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale:

The Classification Review Committee recommends that the FWP Commission adopt rules for the following classification of exotic wildlife:

- **Controlled**-- The following exotic wildlife may be possessed only with a Controlled Species Permit issued by FWP:
Tilapia (*Oreochromis* spp.)

Proposed Motion:

I move that the commission approve the proposed rules for the classification of exotic species as recommended by the classification review committee.